

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANJUL 00060 160951Z
ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5069
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANJUL 0060

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV GA
SUBJ: HIGH LEVEL PERSONNEL CHANGES

1. DURING JAN 9 CONVERSATIONS WITH CHARGE, GOTG SECRETARY GENERAL CHRISTENSEN SAID THAT LONG PENDING PERSONNEL CHANGES AT TOP OF CIVIL SERVICE MAY BE EXPECTED FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S RETURN FROM WEST GERMANY AT END OF THIS MONTH. SHIFTS AMONG PERMANENT SECRETARIES HAD BEEN EXPECTED FOLLOWING CABINET RE-SHUFFLE THAT RESULTED FROM APRIL 1977 GENERAL ELECTION. HOWEVER, NEED FOR CONTINUITY THROUGH DECEMBER CILSS CONFERENCE FINALLY PRECLUDED SUCH CHANGES UNTIL CONCLUSION CILSS EXERCISE.

2. KEY POSITION TO BE FILLED IS THAT OF CHRISTENSEN HIMSELF, WHO TOLD CHARGE THAT HIS RETIREMENT (MANDATORY AT AGE 55 FOR ALL GAMBIAN CIVIL SERVANTS) WILL HAVE EFFECT FROM AUGUST 1978. OTHER SHIFTS WILL FALL IN LINE ONCE PRESIDENT SELECTS NEW SECRETARY GENERAL. CHRISTENSEN SAID SIR DAWDA OPPOSES PROMOTION OF DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL M. M. SOSSEH (LONG-TIME NUMBER TWO TO CHRISTENSEN), AND ALSO NOW APPEARS TO HAVE DECIDED AGAINST AGRICULTURE PERMANENT SECRETARY FRANCIS M'BOGE, WHO SEEMED TO HAVE EDGE ON JOB.

3. IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR WHO WILL SECURE PRESIDENTIAL NOD FOR KEY SECRETARY GENERAL POSITION, BUT CHRISTENSEN IS ANXIOUS THAT NEW MAN HAVE AT LEAST 6-MONTH OVERLAP. RETIREMENT OF CHRISTENSEN
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WILL HAVE PROFOUND EFFECT ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, AND PRESIDENT IS FULLY AWARE IMPORTANCE OF THIS POSITION AS WELL AS DEEP POLITICAL CURRENTS WHICH UNDERLIE CANDIDACIES OF VARIOUS HOPEFULS.
WYGANT

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